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March 1998

Amateur Radio - Computers - Communications - Internet

Y2K - British Perspective

LONDON, ENGLAND, 1998 FEB 2 (NB) — By Steve Gold, Newsbytes. Considering that the British government has, in recent weeks, made a number of key moves to tackle the Year 2000 computer problem, Peter de Jager, the Year 2000 guru, caused more than a few eyebrows to be raised at a business event late last week, when he accused Tony Blair's administration of shunning the crisis.

"Act now or you're dead — this is better than asbestos cigarettes for lawyers," he told key chief executives from around the UK at a Regent Associates' Conference last week in London.

De Jager, chairman of Year 2000 crisis awareness organization, de Jager and Company, said that the British government and many UK commercial organizations are still failing to recognize that their IT systems are broken, when it comes to the millennium problem.

He predicted that all other corporate IT projects would go on hold by the end of this year as companies start to focus their attention on fixing the Millennium Bug.

Newsbytes notes that Regent Associates is a leading specialist in handling European mergers and acquisitions in the hi-tech sector. The Regent Conference is held annually and attracts a large audience of the UK's senior chief executives from the technology industry and the wider business world.

At the event where de Jager was speaking, Regent Associates' chief ex-

70% of Technology Execs fear Y2K Bug

DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A., 1998 FEB 4 (NB) — By Craig Menefee, Newsbytes. A poll of highly placed technology executives on the so-called Year 2000 (Y2K) or "millennium bug" problem shows more than 70 percent do not think solutions will be in place in time, according to CIO magazine. More than half said they will avoid commercial airplanes on January 1, 2000, or at least think long and hard before boarding.

The survey was taken as a CIO magazine "KnowPulse Poll" during an enterprise technology management conference in Dana Point, California, this week. The 400 respondents included chief information officers (CIOs) and chief executives officers (CEOs) at many US Fortune 500 companies, the magazine said.

A CIO spokesperson told Newsbytes this was the first such poll the publication has taken. CIO holds various executive-oriented conferences and a poll seemed a natural way to tap into upper-level opinions about various issues at Fortune 500 companies.

"Since you've got 'em all in one room anyway, you might as well ask, right?" commented the source.

The Year 2000 or Y2K bug will afflict computers, including PCs, that misinterpret the "00" year-digits when the millennium turns on Jan 1, 2000. Non-compliant computers will act as if it is the year 1900, causing mishaps such as bills with 100 years of accumulated interest, and eligibility problems in age-related areas like driver licensing.

Joseph L. Levy, CEO, president, and group publisher of CIO Communications, told Newsbytes the Y2K problem has been "systematically underestimated," and called for a national effort in the US to bring systems into compliance.

"We need a new version of the Marshall Plan just to get everyone focused on fixing this thing," he declared. "Lots of things still haven't been taken care of. My personal opinion is that the American populace is in the dark about how precarious their position could be."

He added: "Do you work in a tall building? I will not be in the Empire State Building at the turn of the century. Every elevator is computer controlled, and a lot of the embedded elevator systems are not compliant. They'll refuse to operate when they think they haven't had any maintenance in 100 years. People simply do not realize how computer-dependent we all are."

The 400 polled executives apparently agreed. Some of the findings were striking, considering how cautious such executives normally are in public.

Sixty percent said people with bank accounts had better take a close look at their bank's Year 2000 compliance, if they want to keep their assets intact.

"Bank vault doors are date-controlled," noted Levy. "All the banks are

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ecutive Peter Rowell told more than 300 delegates that the Year 2000 problem was first raised as a major concern by a chief executive at the first Regent Conference back in 1996.

The burgeoning number of mergers and acquisitions in the UK's tech sector, he said, which now make up 30 percent of all such deals, meant that Britain's techno economy now played a major commercial role.

In his address, meanwhile, de Jager issued a blistering attack on the UK Government. "In the UK, the government is happy to spend UKP 750 million on a millennium party, but has set aside only UKP 300 million to fix its computer systems, while BT allocated UKP 350 million to solve the problem," he said.

According to de Jager, after Robin Guernier, formerly the chief executive of the Government sponsored Taskforce 2000 millennium crisis awareness initiative, created to investigate the issue in the UK, delivered his first report, the British government "disbanded his organization claiming he was exaggerating the extent of the problem —that's how serious your government is taking this issue."

De Jager claimed that commercial organizations that had begun to realize the full implications of the millennium bug were estimating final costs of fixing the problem would be more that ten fold those of initial estimates.

He forecasted that, when January 1, 2000, arrives, lawyers would be inundated with actions against companies which had failed to fix the problem. "For the legal community, this is better than asbestos cigarettes," he quipped.

interconnected and if one system isn't compliant, it can bring down any other big system trying to communicate with it. Records could be lost or changed in unpredictable ways. We live in an interconnected world."

Nearly half of the high-level business and technology executives polled said they think their jobs could be in jeopardy if they do not fix the Y2K problem in time, despite technical, staffing, cost, and other obstacles.

Levy urged US President Bill Clinton to keep citizens informed. He said the US Congress should mandate regular Y2K reports by such agencies as the Federal Reserve, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

"None of us want to be surprised on January 1, 2000," he declared.

In other areas, the study confirmed, if confirmation were needed, a technology staffing crisis in all US industry sectors. The Department of Commerce has said 300,000 unfilled positions exist in the US and, if the crisis continues unchecked, more than 1.3 million positions will be unfilled by the year 2006.

Sixty-eight percent of the polled executives blamed an explosive, unanticipated demand for high-tech workers, while 15 percent mentioned the inability of colleges and universities to turn out students with the required skills. Twenty-two percent said the demand for workers is being fueled by the Year 2000 problem, another 22 percent cited global marketing and competition, while 21 percent cited technology growth itself as the culprit.

The executives disagreed about whether the US should change its immigration policies. Forty-four percent want the US to relax its immigration laws in order to attract high-tech talent, while 56 percent oppose such a change.

CIO magazine publisher CIO Communications is an arm of market research firm IDG. More on the poll, including charts and graphs, can be found through the magazine's World Wide Web site at http://www.cio.com/conferences/evr98/index.htm .

Elton John/Princess Diana Macro Virus MADRID, SPAIN, 1998 JAN 23 (NB) — By Steve Gold, Newsbytes. A benign macro virus that displays the first two verses of Elton John's Princess Diana tribute song has surfaced in Spain, Newsbytes has learned. The macro virus is spread by e-mail attachments and only affects Windows MS-Word users.

Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant with Dr Solomon's, one of the longest running antivirus and security firms (previously known as S&S International), told Newsbytes that a few reports started coming in from Spain on Wednesday of this week, but the virus is not very widespread.

"It's a benign one, which means it does nothing other than display the text to the Diana tribute song, and it's `not in the wild," he told Newsbytes, adding that, by this, he means that the macro virus is not particularly widespread.

"I think it's caught the public's imagination in Spain because of the memory of Princess Diana's tragic death," he said, adding that unconfirmed reports suggest that a Spanish antivirus vendor has made a splash about the virus on its Web pages.

Newsbytes' research on the subject suggest that very few people have been affected by the so called Elton John macro virus, which Newsbytes notes can be coded quite simply as an MS-Word macro with a simple text file attachment, and then attached as a "payload" to the header of one of the many existing MS-Word macro viruses.

"There are 1,700 of these (viruses) out there (in the wild), but this one is benign, so there isn't too much to worry about," said Cluley.

Dr Solomon's Web site is at http://www.drsolomon.com .

Brown Engineering Inc.
5501 S.W. 25th Court - Hollywood, Florida
Custom Metal Fabrication
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e-mail: w4sn@aol.com
H.B. Fraser **President**
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NEWSBRIEFS

FBI wiretap plans criticized. Civil liberties groups criticize FBI wiretap plans, call on Federal Communications Commission to protect security and privacy.

CDT and Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility filed comments on February 11 urging the FCC to block the FBI's efforts to expand the scope of the digital telephony law ('CALEA'). The groups warned that the FBI is trying to negotiate with telephone companies outside the public view to acquire more intrusive monitoring capabilities. Their comments are at:

http://www.cdt.org/digi_tele/index.html#980211

The groups urged the FCC to shift the focus of its inquiry to the security and privacy issues posed by wiretapping in a world of computerized, networked telephone switches. They warned that switch-based solutions adopted under CALEA may increase the vulnerability of the telephone system.

CDT and CPSR also urged the FCC to launch an inquiry into the privacy implications of surveillance in packet switched networks. Packet switching is the basis of many Internet communications, but is now increasingly used for voice communications, where it may result in the government capturing communications it has no authority to intercept.

CDT has posted a copy of the comments the FBI filed at the FCC, at http://www.cdt.org/digi_tele/CALEA_FBI_Reply980211.html They provide a picture of the FBI's view of what CALEA means.

CDT Policy Post Vol 4 No. 3.2

Fingerprinting becoming a plague. Fingerprinting — once reserved for suspected criminals — is becoming a national plague. The FBI estimated that it will process 14 million requests for fingerprints. In January 1998, Michigan parents were outraged when administrators of the state's standardized education tests apparently broke the law by requiring 122,000 public school fifth-graders to submit their fingerprints without parental permission. The fingerprints were collected as part of a science segment in this year's Michigan Educational Assessment Program test. The 1985 Child Identification and Protection Act requires written permission for children to be fingerprinted unless the child is a delinquent or otherwise ordered to be fingerprinted by a judge.

Many states are now using fingerprints for drivers licenses. This is in part being pushed by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The AAMVA wants to develop standards so that information can be exchanged between agencies and jurisdictions.

Banks in 27 states, under pressure from national and state banking associations, have instituted policies which require fingerprinting for some people who cash checks. In a recent survey, the California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG) found that only one year after the practice first began, nearly every large bank in California now requires a fingerprint to cash a non-account holder's check and at least one bank also requires all customers opening new accounts to provide fingerprints. The group warned that, if left unchecked, the trend will spread to all bank account holders and to other industries.

Fingerprinting on driver's licenses has become increasingly controversial. In Georgia, a campaign to repeal the fingerprinting requirement for licenses is under way. A bill to repeal the law allowing the practice passed the State Senate last year. In Alabama, the Department of Public Safety scuttled a plan to fingerprint all driver's license applicants in 1997 after protests. In Washington State, a bill that would have required fingerprints on all driver's licenses was also rejected by the State Senate last year.

SKIP ON TAPE FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

SKIP is put on tape every month for the benefit of the blind or visually impaired. These tapes are available if requested and postage is paid both ways. If you are interested in this valuable service, contact Ms. Desaree Stewart, Library for the Blind, 420 Platt Street, Daytona Beach, FL 32114. **Phone 1-800-226-6075.**

Rear-view mirror with enhanced electronics. NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK, U.S.A., 1998 FEB 19 (NB) — By Sami Menefee, Newsbytes. Johnson Controls [NYSE:JCI] and HighwayMaster Corp [NASDAQ:HWYM] have developed an electronically enhanced vehicle rear-view mirror that combines intelligent communications technology with cellular wireless switching services in the US and Canada. They say they will bring the device to market next year.

The aftermarket unit embeds Johnson's AutoLink technology, linking it to HighwayMaster's wireless network, the firms said.

Drivers and passengers can either push a button or give voice commands to activate the communications functions. Drivers can summon 24-hour roadside service, connect to the global positioning system (GPS) for directions, access the Internet or collect e-mail, or notify authorities in case of theft. The device also displays compass readings and outside temperatures.

The system will have added protection as all calls must pass the AutoLink communications center's security checks.

The firm says the aftermarket mirrors should be available by next September from retail cellular communications outlets. Part of the system will be mounted in the trunk and, thus, not interfere with passenger comfort.

AutoLink technology was originally developed for new car optional equipment items, as part of an overhead display.

Johnson Controls also makes the HomeLink Universal Transceiver, an electronically-operated safety device that opens garage doors, operates door locks and turns on lights inside the house.

The firm says future plans for the HomeLink device include having it check tire pressure, make gasoline payments automatically, and page someone at home with a short-range message.

Johnson Controls has a site on the World Wide Web at http://www.johnsoncontrols.com .

HighwayMaster's AutoLink Web site is at

http://www.autolink.princecorp.com .

Crossword goof: A crossword puzzle in the popular weekly TV Guide January 17 badly blurred the distinction between ham radio and CB. In the puzzle, "CBer" was given as the answer for the clue "ham radio user."

ARRL Public Relations Specialist Jennifer Gagne, N1TDY, wrote TV Guide after several members brought the error to the League's attention. In a follow-up call, she was told that the appropriate staff people were made aware of the mistake and that the magazine may run a brief item telling readers that letters were received on the issue. Gagne said it was unlikely that the puzzle would ever be reprinted.

Internet Sales Tax?

WASHINGTON, DC, U.S.A., 1998 FEB 24 (NB) — By Bill Pietrucha, Newsbytes. Seeking to thwart a moratorium on Internet taxes making its way through Congress, the nation's governors today offered a compromise solution to keep their hands in the Internet sales tax till.

The National Governors Association (NGA), concluding its annual winter meeting here, proposed an Internet Development Act of 1998 seeks to simplify Internet taxation by the states, while opposing the broad preemption of state taxing authority in the Internet Tax Freedom Act before Congress.

The Internet Development Act is "a pro Internet, simplified, sustainable plan that encourages the growth of the Internet, while preserving the states' abilities to provide critical services to its citizens, Ohio Governor George Voinovich said.

Voinovich, chairman of the NGA, also named Utah Gov. Michael Leavitt and Colorado Gov. Roy Romer as the NGA's lead governors in Internet development.

The NGA proposal calls on each state to establish a single, statewide tax rate on electronic sales, and would simplify collection through a state-approved software package for business to use to calculate the sales tax due.

According to Gov. Romer, it also would reward states that achieve uniform tax policy with a means of collecting taxes on goods and services sold on the Internet. In exchange, he said, states would protect the Internet vendors from discriminatory or multiple taxes.

"The 21st century marketplace requires a 21st Century sales tax system that is more uniform, consistent and streamlined," Romer and Leavitt said in a joint statement. "Today there are thousands of jurisdictions across the nation that depend on sales taxes to pay for schools, law enforcement and road construction. The new simplified system will reduce costs and administrative burdens for businesses and consumers."

"Many states fund local government, roads and highways, law enforcement, education by sales tax revenues," Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating said. "If people begin to buy goods and services by Internet and not at the local grocery store, small businesses in local America will be paying the taxes that big businesses in catalog America won't be paying."

By contrast, the Internet Tax Freedom Act, introduced last March in the US House of Representatives by Rep. Christopher Cox (R- California) as HR 1054, and in the Senate, as S 442, by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), would impose an immediate and indefinite moratorium on new state and local taxes affecting Internet access and electronic commerce. The bill also calls on the Clinton Administration to develop a comprehensive plan to address the issue of electronic commerce taxes.

HR 1054 is now on the House calendar of bills to be considered before the Easter recess, with a floor vote expected next March.

Cox said his legislation is aimed at "ensuring the continued technological development of the Internet by protecting both Internet users and electronic commerce conducted over the Internet from burdensome state and local taxes and foreign tariffs."

"Many people are looking at the World Wide Web as a 'world wide wallet," Cox said.

The legislation, however, would not apply to normal business income taxes or sales taxes that also apply to interstate mail order and telephone orders.

The bill, which already has more than 100 co-sponsors in the House, earlier this month picked up the support of House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX), as well as the support of California's Gov. Pete Wilson, New York's Gov. George Pataki, Massachusetts' Gov. Paul Cellucci, and Virginia's Gov. George Allen, who together represent 25% of the nation's population.

Govs. Wilson, Pataki and Allen all expressed reservations over the Internet Development Act.

Along with Govs. Allen, Pataki and Wilson, a number of other governors have endorsed the Internet Tax Freedom Act, including Pennsylvania's Gov. Tom Ridge, who recently signed into law a $167 million tax cut bill that included a complete repeal of Pennsylvania's six percent sales tax on the use of computer services, which had been enacted in 1991.

"This tax was a major impediment as we tried to attract high-tech jobs to Pennsylvania," Ridge said.

Governors Association, 202-624-5364)

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Planes Briefly Left Flying Blind

Hundreds of airline flights were canceled or delayed after a technician at an air traffic control center accidentally removed the wrong circuit card. Bill Shumann, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration said the technician "made a mistake" while conducting preventive maintenance at the center near Olathe, Kansas, just before Christmas. Shumann said the technician shut down one of two electrical systems providing power to the control center, and then mistakenly removed a circuit card from the active electrical system. The error shut off power to the computers, radars, and voice communications systems. The center controls air traffic over a 195,000 square mile area that covers parts of eight states, including Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Texas, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Illinois. Limited radio communications was restored within four minutes, but it took center officials 20 minutes to bring a backup system online and about five hours to get the control center working normally again.

Cybersitter blocks WWW advertisements

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A., 1998 FEB 12 (NB) — By Craig Menefee, Newsbytes. Solid Oak Software's Internet content filtering product Cybersitter has added a feature to block to World Wide Web site advertisements, the firm announced Thursday. The optional feature requires a plug-in filter that users can download at no charge.

The privately held firm claims its new filter can distinguish most banner ads from other graphics and keep them from showing up in a browser, though it acknowledges the filter is not yet perfect.

Brian Milburn, president of Solid Oak, told Newsbytes the ability to eliminate banner ads was requested by many of Cybersitter's 1.3 million users.

"Many of our users are less sophisticated about computers than the users of, say, the Eudora e-mail program. One of the most common things we heard from them was — hey, can you do something about all these animated banners we get?"

Milburn said a typical user who objects to the banners has an older computer with a slow modem: "It takes forever to load a 10K or 20K banner ad on a system like that."

He continued: "I happened to be in a Best Buy store about a month ago to look at their VCRs, and discovered there are VCRs now that will zip right past the commercials. I thought, well, why can't we make Cybersitter do something like that? So we wrote a plug-in for it —it's available on our Web site but we're still working on it and will be for some time. We're still tuning it. We could have charged for it I guess but we decided not to."

Milburn says the plug-in will eliminate the annoyance of going to a Web site and having to wait until "four or five animated banners load, advertising things that you really don't care about."

He declined to talk about how the plug-in tells an ad from other graphics, but did say that to turn down an unwanted graphic, the plug-in makes it "invisible" to a browser so it never actually requests the graphic from the Web site.

Current Cybersitter 97 customers need only update their filtering categories to have the option of blocking Web ads, the firm said.

Free trial versions of Cybersitter and more information are available at Solid Oak Software's Web site at http://www.cybersitter.com .

QUIT AOL!

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A., 1998 FEB 10 (NB) — By Sami Menefee, Newsbytes. EarthLink Network [NASDAQ:ELNK] is offering America Online [NYSE:AOL] members "all you can eat access" to the Internet for a flat $19.95 monthly rate. AOL members who switch will get free set-up for unlimited Internet access.

The offer, named after the Monopoly "get out of jail free" game card, comes only a day after AOL announced a $2 rate hike to be applied on April's bill.

"People don't mind paying for quality service, but most people are sick up and fed up with inferior service, which includes spam, sales of e-mail lists, busy signals, and now rate hikes," said Howard Lefkowitz, EarthLink vice president of business development.

EarthLink's Total Access software is included with the enrollment, with features like DLL placement and point of presence (POP) updates for "road warriors." Lefkowitz said the POP list was over 1,000 now, "four times more than any other ISP (Internet service provider) in the US."

Each new member gets a personal start page, with favorite content up front, e-mail notification, and top content providers. As a user's experience level grows, he said, that front page is designed to grow with them.

Lefkowitz said the ISP has full time staffers who "proactively monitor the service for spam, to make sure our zero tolerance policy is maintained."

EarthLink says its service has no browser limitations, more access points than any other ISP, and free change of address notification that automatically inserts all names into an address book for both sender and recipient.

EarthLink's "Get Out of AOL Free" program is for AOL members only. It is available on the Web at http://www.EarthLink.net/quitaol or by calling 888-QUIT-AOL (784-8205).

FBI Expands Surveillance

Congress enacted the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA)—popularly called the 'digital telephony'law—in 1994. The FBI is now trying to use the law to require special surveillance features in the nation's land-based and wireless telephone systems. Telephone companies have yielded to some of the FBI's demands and have resisted others, but now face pressure to compromise further.

* Under pressure from the FBI, the wireless phone industry has agreed to provide law enforcement with the capability to track the location of cellular phone users. * The telephone industry has also agreed that carriers using increasingly common 'packet switching' protocols may provide to the government the full content of customer communications even though the government is only legally authorized to intercept the less sensitive addressing data that indicates who is calling whom.

Despite these concessions, the FBI remains unsatisfied with the industry's proposed compliance plan. The FBI continues its push for additional surveillance features, including the ability to —* continue monitoring parties on a conference call after the subject of the wiretap order has dropped off the call; * collect detailed information identifying each party on a call, including parties not the subject of investigation; and * receive instant notification when a customer has a voice mail waiting or makes any changes in service.

The FBI also has proposed requiring carriers to install capacity for far more surveillances than ever before. See http://www.cdt.org/digi_tele/970218_comments.html.

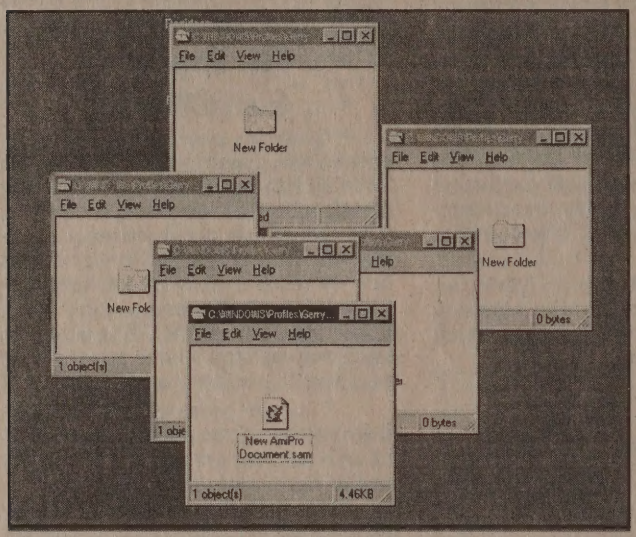
-Center for Democracy and Technology

Windows for Weenies

Organizing/Controlling your messes

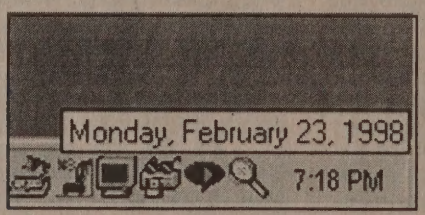
If you're like many of us computer-wise users, and I use that term lightly, you probably have demonstrated complete lack of foresight by creating a horrible number of directories within directories. It's not too bad in your Windows Explorer - just keep clicking plus (+) signs until you make your way down to the directory of choice.

But, if you've created or come upon one of these messes on your desktop, you end up with little windows strewn all over the place along with more buttons than enough on the taskbar.

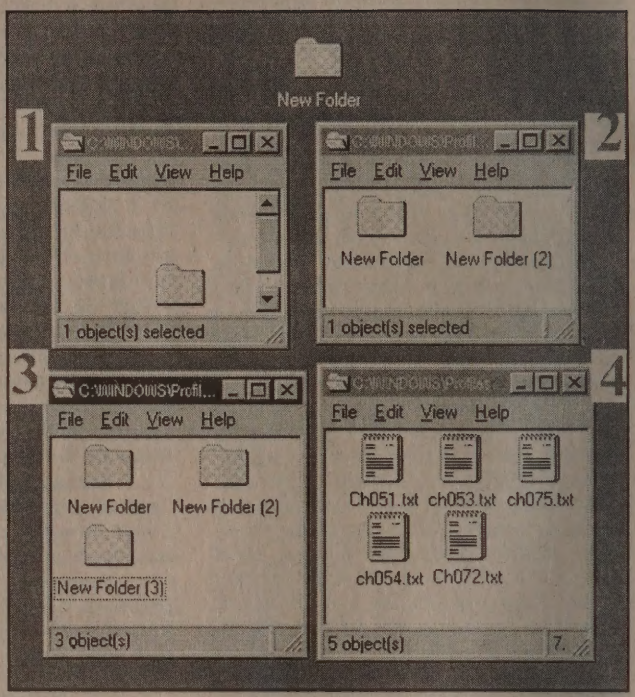


While I'm on the subject, when you have many windows or applications open, each one creates another button on the task bar. With the creation of each new button, the text on a button gets truncated a bit. After while, there are not many of the buttons that make sense since most of the text has been obliterated. No big deal! Just hold your mouse pointer on a button for a second or two and magically, a little window pops up containing the complete text.

Which reminds me of another handy item. Wonder what the date is? Can't find your calendar. You don't want to wind your way to the Date/Time on the Control Panel. Wellllll.....just hold that little mouse cursor over the time readout in the lower right corner of the taskbar and the little window pops up with the date.



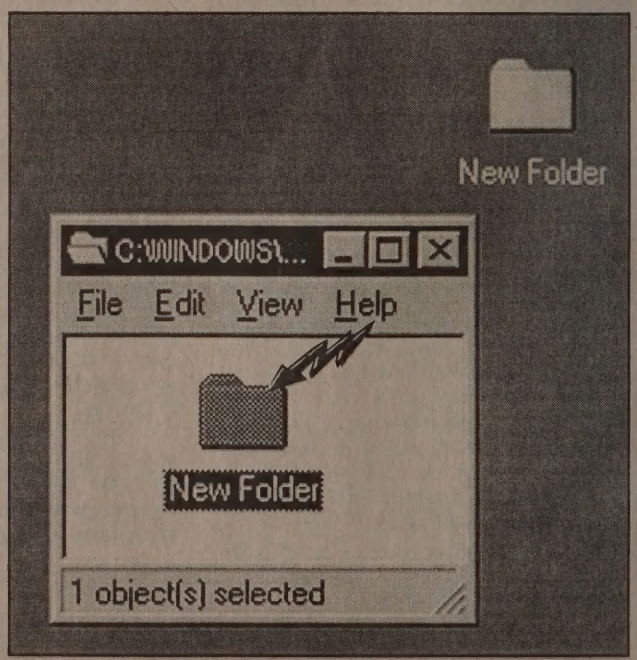
Now, back to the original topic of messes. There is a very simple way to avoid having more windows open than the one you wish to deal with. In Example 1, I have organized my mess to show the path to all the text files I ultimately want to work with. If you open the lonely little folder at the top, you have a window with another folder. Click on that folder and there are two folders in that window. Get the drift? Down the line, you get to the text files.



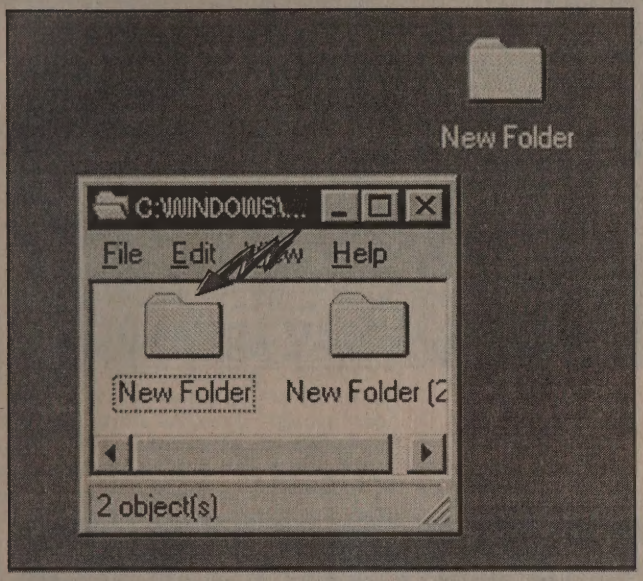
Example 1

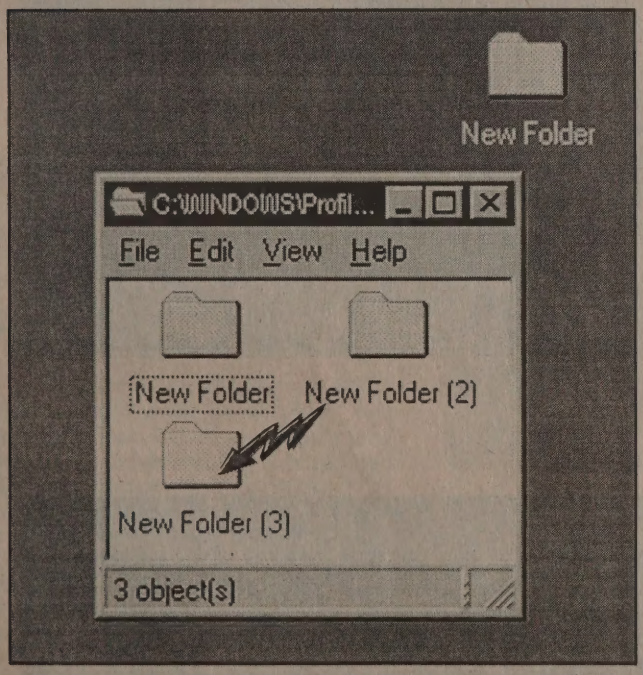
Ordinarily, the open windows are not so neatly arranged and if you start clicking around trying to figure out which folder (some windows have many folders) you're supposed to click on, you'll surely end up with a mess like the first one. Then when you decide you're finished, you have to close all those windows. I know, it isn't hard, but it's a pain in the you know what when you're in a hurry.

To avoid all these unnecessary windows, all you have to do is open your first folder which. in our example, opens the window with one folder shown.



Now, hold down the Ctrl button and double click on the folder. The second window (containing two folders) will open and replace the window showing the one folder.





Just keep doing this until you reach your folder of choice. When you're through with whatever your doing, you have only one window to close. Neat huh?

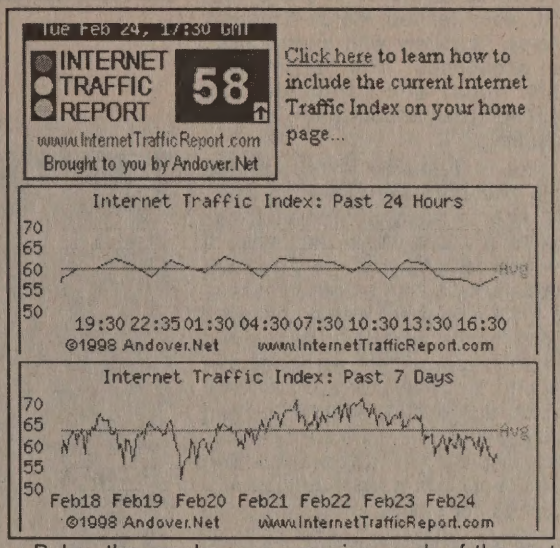
Internet Traffic Report

If you're planning to do some serious browsing on the Internet and maybe planning some sizable downloads, it would be nice to know if a couple million other people have a similar notion. As a few of the Internet users are aware, there are times that trying to do much of anything beyond getting connected is an exercise in frustration.

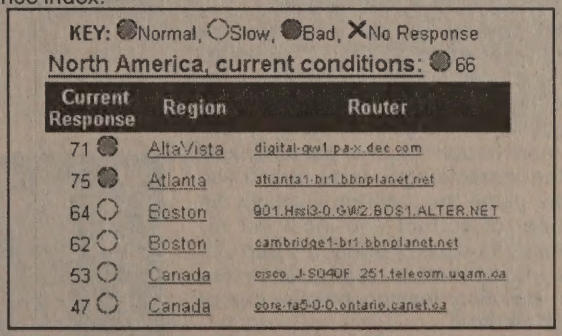
There is an interesting web site from which one can determine the level of congestion of the major league routers in North America, Asia, and Europe. The Andover Net offers the Internet Traffic Report which measures the performance of major Internet rounters throughout the world by sampling once every hour. The performance data is summarized as a consolidated Traffic Index, with 0 as the worst possible value and 100 the best.

When you connect to the site, you see a window containing a "traffic light" with a number prominently displayed by the side. A green light indicates Normal traffic, yellow - Slow, Red - Bad and X - no response. The number indicates the average performance at the present time.

Directly below the traffic light, one can view graphs of Internet Traffic Index for the past 24 hours or for the past 7 days.



Below the graphs, one can view each of the routers along with their current "color code" and numerical performance index.



It's nice to know if you're planning to download a nifty 6MB file from a German site German routers are showing a "yellow light" meaning slow. In any language that translates to, FORGET IT!

I highly recommend that you check out the Andover site. In addition, the site has a wealth of useful information which, in itself, could keep you occupied for many hours of interesting browsing.

The Andover News Network

http://www.andovernews.com/trafficreport.html

Shareware Reviews

Ronnie Cohen, KF4GHG

MORSE ACADEMY

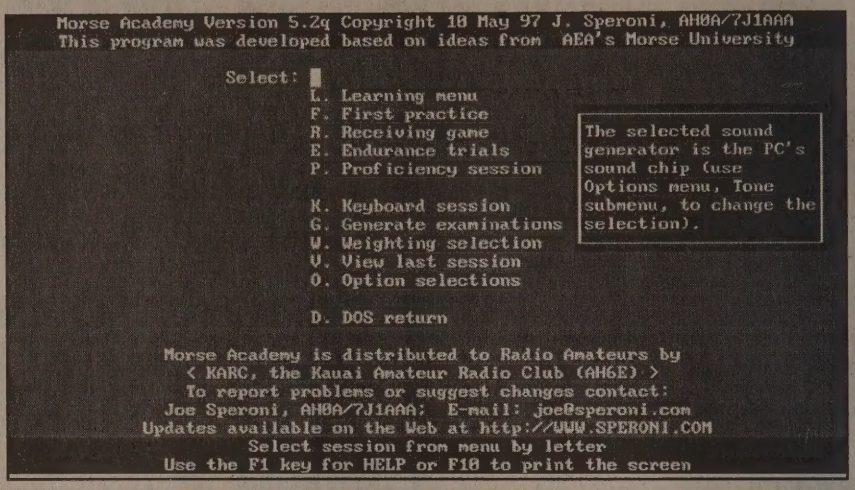
One of the greatest thrills for Hams occur when they pass their CW code test. To pass that test a Ham needs to dedicate time, practice and use good study tools. Morse Academy is a computer aided instructional study tool for both the beginner and experienced user. It reduces code practice time and provide the code skills to pass the CW test.

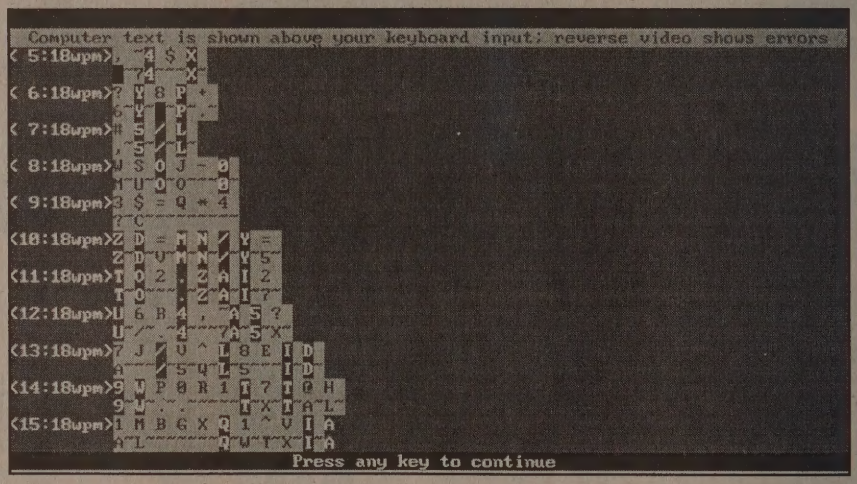
Morse Academy features several configuration options to make it easy to learn and increase CW code skills. The program allows you to work with letters, numbers and/or punctuation. You can start off with specific characters and add new ones as you progress. These characters will be displayed in one of four (ARRL, user defined, Morse Academy or Morse Academy with international code) sequences. The transmission sounds (tones and frequency) and speed (wpm) can be configured for each sequencing.

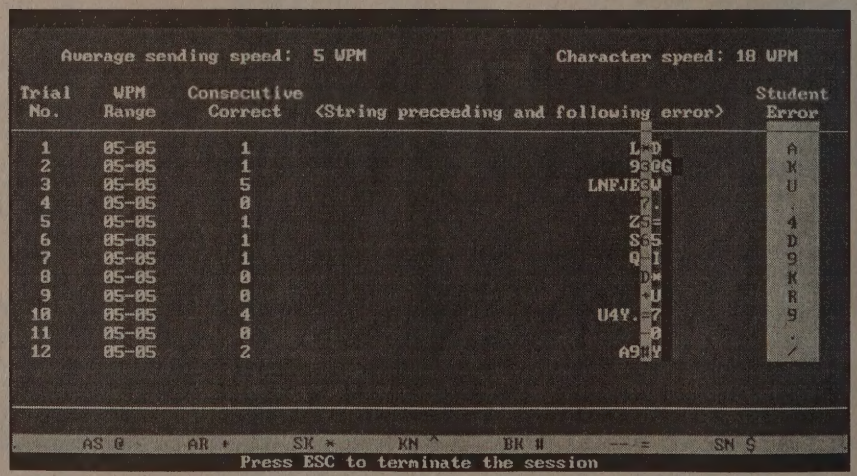
You start learning the code with simple keyboard and listening exercises. Morse Academy transmits the character's sound while displaying a large flash card image of the character. Your mind needs to get used to associating the sound to the character. After you are familiar with the sounds and characters, you practice responding to the sound, by pressing the character's key. Incorrect responses are noted with a buzzing sound, and the correct character is displayed. The concept behind Morse Academy is to teach code by repetition and correction.

Morse Academy features a code game to help you sharpen your skills. You have three minutes to press character keys as they are sounded. For every twenty correct answers the game's transmission speed increases, incorrect responses generate a flash card with the correct character. You can configure the game to transmit vowels more frequently, or to put emphasis on the characters you miss. At the end of the game the program displays the number of correct and incorrect responses for each charter. You can use this information to resequence the learning lesson for more practice in your weak areas.

If you find the game too slow or boring you might be ready for Morse Academy's Endurance Trails or the Proficiency Session. During the Endurance Trail, characters are continuously transmitted until you make an error and than you start over. Twenty correct characters and the transmission speed increases. During the Proficiency Session the speed is constantly being increased. At the end of the Proficiency







Session the program displays the correct and incorrect characters for each transmission rate.

After you have completed the lessons, played the game and survived the Endurance Trails and Proficiency Session you may be ready for your code test. To help determine if you are ready for your code test, the program will generate example (code and questions) Novice, General and Extra exams. If you do well with the examples you are read to feel the thrill of passing your code test.

Morse Academy was written by Joseph Sheroni (AH0A/7J1AAA) and should run with any PC (DOS or Windows). It will run off of a floppy, but a hard drive is recommended to increase the program's speed. The program supports seven sound/signal generators including the computer's speaker. Morse Academy is a great tool for learning code and it will even improve your typing skills. For more information about Morse Academy or a free disk catalog and coupon, please contact Mom 'N' Pop's Software <ASP>, P.O. Box 15003-HD, Spring Hill, FL. 34609, (352) 688-9108, momnpop@gate.net.

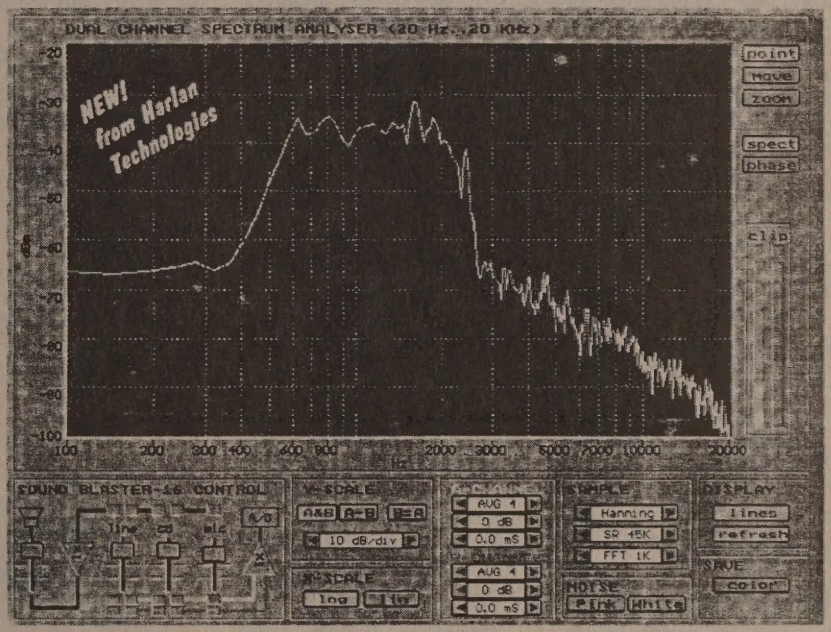
FCC Amateur Radio computer system down

The FCC's Amateur Radio licensing computer system is down, and, at this point, no one knows when it will be up and running again. The computer system failed February 10. Sources at the FCC attribute the situation to a combination of problems. The FCC's computer system has failed before, but not for this long.

The situation affecting the FCC's Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, office, has frustrated those who have been hoping to learn their new call signs or updated licensing status. On-line public FCC databases on the Internet also have been affected. A spokesman at Gettysburg said no paper or electronic applications had been processed since the computer system stopped functioning a week ago.

The FCC indicated to ARRL/VEC earlier this week that it had not yet been able to resolve the problems but would let Volunteer Examiner Coordinators know when the system was back on line. In the meantime, VECs were asked to not file any Amateur Radio applications.

HHH



SPECTRUM FFT

Audio Spectrum Analyzer for the SB16 or AWE-32 Sound Blaster

Spectrum FFT is an audio spectrum frequency analyzer with the ability to output noise (pink or white) for testing of filters, sound systems, and room acoustics as well as to monitor the audio spectrum from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz (input and output can be simultaneous). Input can be from line in, mike in, or CD in on the sound card, and all controlled by software using your mouse. Two channels can be shown at the same time, added, or subtracted. You can freeze the display, point to display the dB and frequency, zoom, move to show the frequency range of interest, and save a display to a .PCX file for later evaluation. Compare this program with others that cost hundreds of dollars more!

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Requires PC computer (386 or faster) with DOS 3.3 or higher, 640K memory with hard drive, VGA monitor, and a Sound Blaster SB16 or AWE32

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(815) 398-2683 - voice (815) 398-2683 - fax
email - gharlan@orin.com

Air Force MARS - Carl Houston, Jr. (AFF2P), Editor

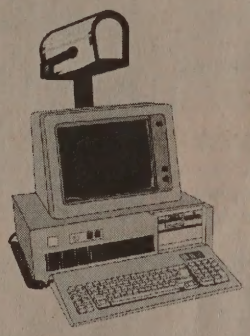
THE NEXT GENERATION... At the recent Jackson, MS hamfest I was really surprised and delighted at some of the things I saw. Not what you might think: old vintage transmitters or new 10-band antennas, but a more rare, enlightening sight. There were literally dozens of young boys and girls about 10-15 years of age talking ham radio like the old-timers. They were there in dozens from the Mississippi Delta to the Vicksburg bluffs. Many upgraded at the exams on Saturday and Sunday morning, and the proud dads rewarded them with new HTs and other things for their accomplishments. There were more excited faces than on many Christmas mornings. The local Civil Air Patrol cadets volunteered to help with parking and other chores for admission to the hamfest flea market and they, too, were very interested in ham radio, MARS, and other aspects of the hobby. I hope that the enthusiasm I saw there that weekend is prevalent in other areas as well. We really need to keep the pressure on and retain the interest in amateur and public service communications to our young successors.

BIX RELOCATING... Bix Bixby, AFF2M/AFA2EA and PJ, AFA2AP are in the process of moving to Scottsbluff, NE as of mid-February. Bix will assume the Director of Engineering position with Western Total Communications/Tracy Broadcasting. WTC is expanding and Bix will be an integral part of that operation. "I gather I'll be the only USAF MARS member in Western Nebraska" he says, "with most of the activity centered in the Omaha/Offutt AFB area. I'll be getting a packet operation going as soon as I get settled in, but those little "details" have yet to be worked out." "As you might expect, (we have) a lot of mixed feelings about this move. It's an exciting opportunity. We certainly will miss our friends in Region 2 and most especially, the folks in Virginia, many of whom are the ones who actually did the work that I try to take credit for. We'll take a lot of friendships with us, and a lot of what you folks taught us about MARS, ham radio and life. With a little luck, we'll find a few folks out there who share Region 2's committment to USAF MARS, and we'll be able to keep learning from them. Thanks to all for the support and friendship." Region 2 USAF MARS wishes you the best and thank you for your services in the past, Bix. Stay in touch.

FEMA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS... During much of December and January, FEMA operated Disaster Field Offices in six Eastern states due to a series of catastrophies. FEMA personnel were located in Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and New York coping with severe ice storm damage. According to Harry Marsters, AFN1EC, some emergency communications were usable most of the time, and hams played a role in assisting in many parts of the affected areas. In his home state of Maine, nearly 11,000 customers were without power and 62 shelters were operating, assisting between 500 and 700 people continuously, with a total of about 1200-1300 on a limited basis. Harry states that "I know of no USAF MARS Operations in Maine other than my station providing updates (from the Air National Guard Station Command Post in South Portland, ME) via VHF handheld radio. NAVMARCORMARS in Northern New England brought up an emergency HF net at 1300Z on 08 Jan. The net was subsequently shifted to a region wide net with Net Control stations outside the effected areas. A total of ten stations in NNE, including one mobile, were able to get up on the air at one point or another through 11 Jan. With only one exception, all were on emergency power. For many stations, antennas were downed within the first 24 hours (07 Jan). The first of 19 EEI reports from the area was sent at 1200Z 08 Jan as soon as the magnitude of the storm was visible." "With over half of the population in Maine without power" he continues, "and with virtually all secondary roads in the mid and central areas of the state closed, the ability to maintain communications, provide local assistance, and develop EEI reports for DOMS was an excellent example of drills being applied to the real world." Closer to home, North Carolina and East Tennessee had unseasonally large amounts of moisture and much destructive flooding, prompting FEMA to assist many individuals in those areas with shelter and food. The severity of conditions were lessened by Red Cross volunteers and the agency, and were not as bad as the Northeastern part of the country. In Florida, Lance Shortt, AFF2FL reports that quite a few EEIs have been sent to DOMS reporting 'Actual Event' scenarios for many areas, especially in the Southwest and West areas along the coasts. Threatening gale and wind EEI advisories were transmitted, and others contained coastal and inland flood warnings. Lance reports that he had good participation in the EEI message handling and conveys his thanks to all involved.

SILENT KEY... Harry Matus, AFA2BU in Bayonet Point, FL reports that William (Bill) H. Adams, AFA2VF/KB4ZS passed away 24 December 1997. Bill was very active with Air Force MARS through the years. All who knew him have lost a good friend, and cannot forget that he was a very helpful and friendly member of USAF MARS and the ham community. He will be missed. I apologize for getting this reported so tardily, but it was received too late for inclusion in last month's SKIP.

E/MAIL ADDRESSES... Do you have a new or changed e/mail address? If you have come on-line recently or have a change, please advise your SMD or ASMD promptly. Remember, the E/mail service you have will NOT be the primary traffic handling medium, but is very useful to get administrative information to all concerned in a timely manner. It is in daily use to handle minor affairs that crop up and need to be addressed quickly and has proven to be a worthy tool for that purpose. The HQ staff at Scott AFB has limited personnel and lots of work to do daily. If you have anything you need MARS staff assistance with, you can probably get it quickly and easily by contacting your SMD or his assistant(s), which is in keeping with the chain-of-command regulation. If it needs to go as far as HQ, the state official will see to it.



USAF MARS
CONFERENCE

AUGUST 1998

LOUISVILLE, KY

http://personal.sdf.bellsouth.net/sdf/k/d/kd4gln

Thanks for your adhering to this directive.

SPRING IS HERE and we hope that the sunshine and better weather is here to stay. Get those antennas tightened and tuned, and participate as often as you can. See you on the nets!

AIM HIGH!

DISCLAIMER: This is not an official United States Air Force release, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Air Force or the MARS.

Army MARS - Lorraine S. Matthew (AAA9PR), Editor

The Army MARS Code, discussed in last month's column, is reflected in a new program developed for Army MARS by Cindy Rogers/AAA9AX and Jim Rogers/AAA9AC.

The program's name, Helping Hands, was suggested by Chief Army MARS, Robert Sutton after initial proposals were presented by AAA9AC and AAA9AX who offered to help disabled MARS members. The idea to offer this program arose from the work that AAA9AC and AAA9AX do with the disabled. Both are part-time System Operators (SySops) for Partnerships in Assistive Technology, a nonprofit organization in NC. They provide instruction on and resources for: how to use the computer, software, hardware, the Internet, e-mail and adaptive technology. They are charged with running a forum for the disabled in which ideas and adaptive technology are presented and exchanged. They also write educational and consumer articles on the computer, Internet, software and hardware usage and repair. As all MARS and Amateur Radio Operators do, they help fellow HAMS and MARS members in setting up their stations, TNCs for packet radios, computers, antennas. Prior to a car accident, AAA9AX was a Social Worker for the Blind with extensive experience in teaching the client, family and other professionals help the disabled person with independence skills. AAA9AX worked with the blind, Deaf, Deaf-Blind, those paralyzed and all other disabilities. It occurred to both of them that this could be a viable program in MARS whether implemented formally or informally. In their Chief's Staff positions, this kind of help seemed, to them, to be a part of their work for the members. AAA9AC and AAA9AX are themselves disabled.

Helping Hands is a program to help any disabled member in MARS to be as independent, active and fully functional as possible.

Helping Hands will enable any member to function independently or with minimal assistance to be as fully an active member for the MARS program as possible. Assistance can be given from AAA9AC, AAA9AX, from a regular Army MARS member, or from the Army MARS Auxiliary. This program is designed to be a coordinated effort utilizing the skills of not only AAA9AC and AAA9AX but all Army MARS members with the desire and ability to help their fellow members.

Goals are for the disabled MARS member to be able to: 1. Know and keep current with all MARS rules and regulations. 2. Receive and be able to read all CAM, Area Director and SMD bulletins, EEI messages, MARSgrams and all other manuals and directives to be able to act on them. 3. Operate his/her voice and digital communications stations 4. Learn to use text-to-speech software for the blind, voice recognition software for the quadriplegic and paraplegic and/or use any other adaptive technology. 4. Use the computer, the Internet and e-mail independently 5. Assist others with similar disabilities to also be able to be active members. 6. Each state will be asked to have a point of contact for the Helping Hands program.

Helping Hands shows the members that no matter what their disability, that Army MARS wants everyone to be able to take part. Each member is important, needed, and can be able to assist with emergencies, message handling and all other facets of the Army MARS program. Helping Hands is the way to thank all disabled members for wanting to support the Department of Defense, Department of the Army, the military and their families and all fellow members despite sometimes desperate health situations.

Any member needing assistance through Helping Hands, at this writing, has been invited by Chief Army MARS to contact directly AAA9AC and/or AAA9AX by MARSgram, e-mail, letter or phone. SMDs are invited to refer members for assistance. Upon receipt of a request for assistance, immediate action is taken with follow-up.

AAA9AC and AAA9AX are willing to train anyone who wishes to help a member. The Helping Hands can be done through regular members or the Auxiliary, whatever is practical or necessary. Training can be done by MARSgram, phone, e-mail, packet, letter. Training may range from teaching a member the proper method to read to a blind member to assistance with how to describe methodology of setting up a packet station for another.

A few examples of kinds of assistance that Helping Hands has already provided: 1. A totally blind member in another state requested AAA9AC to help him get on the Internet and use e-mail. AAA9AC worked with him by radio and phone to tell and teach him about a text-only web browser, an e-mail program designed for the blind that works with speech software. AAA9AC sent him the (shareware) program, taught him how to set it up, and taught him how to configure his software to work with it. 2. AAA9AC repaired and taught the use of donated computers for one disabled member to use as, what became, a packet station. 3. AAA9AC and AAA9AX are working to get assistance for a member in a remote area to get his TNC set up so he can participate in RTTY and other digital nets in his state. The SMD will follow up for local assistance. 4. AAR3GG/VA has completed the taping of all manuals for the blind and paralyzed members. AAR3GG has distributed several to those who cannot now read manuals due to blindness and have no family member to read to them. These tapes are under review for accuracy and will be available when this review is completed. 5. AAA9AX with her SMD was able to get a large statewide hamfest to be accessible for her and a member who is in a wheelchair. This meant that for the first time that all members could attend the state joint MARS meeting. Prior to this, it was held upstairs with no elevator access. AAA9AX can counsel state representatives on how to do this and what is needed to make hamfests accessible.

It must be noted that Helping Hands training and assistance is limited to MARS station capabilities only. All assisted members must give their permission if needed to be referred to another member for help. Privacy will be ensured in keeping with DOD/DA MARS regulations.

For further information, please contact:

Jim Rogers, AAA9AC Automation Coordinator
jimlr@mindspring.com / jimlr@ibm.net

Cindy Rogers, AAA9AX Auxiliary Coordinator
crogers@mindspring.com / kr4ls@juno.com

Phone 910-630-1134 Fax 910-630-0396

545 Waterbury Drive Fayetteville NC 28311-1563

My thanks and gratitude go out to Cindy and Jim Rogers and Chief Sutton for their assistance in writing this column. This is a program which will surely allow disabled MARS members to participate more fully and which may encourage disabled Amateurs to become Army MARS members. I have known several severely disabled members who have operated message control centers and other operations that I as a non-disabled member could not even visualize much less do. Congratulations to the Rogers for this proposal and to Chief Sutton for his support of it.

Surely this is the spirit which will keep Army MARS ...

Proud, Professional, and Ready.

Internet Update

Personal Connections Web

Here's another place you can find free e-mail and Web home pages. The Personal Connections site offers a free suite of services that includes Web-based e-mail, an online business card with your contact information, a free home page and a personal white board that can be used to display just about anything! World Wide Web: **http://www.pconnections.net**

Sweden's Moonfire

The Moonfire Web site offers a refreshing alternative to the US centric entertainment and music sites online - an entertainment and music site from a Swedish perspective. There's an interactive database that provides information about cybercasts, entertainment news, chat rooms, audio files and information on new bands. World Wide Web: **http://www.moonfire.se**

Have You Seen This Man?

To coincide with the 500 capture of a criminal as a result of the America's Most Wanted TV show, a new Web site has launched that, along with the TV show, highlights a number of unsolved cases or the information on people being hunted by law enforcement agencies. There's also an interactive crime map of the United States and news on AMW cases. World Wide Web: **http://www.amw.com**

National Security Archive

The National Security Archive is an independent non-governmental research institute and library located at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The Archive collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Online, you can access some selected documents, including a multimedia history of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and find out more about the archive. World Wide Web: **http://www.seas.gwu.edu/nsarchive/**

The Smoking Gun

The Smoking Gun is an interesting site that falls somewhere between research, news and tabloid. You can find scanned documents from courts and the government, obtained through freedom of information requests, on a variety of cases, including the JonBenet Ramsey murder case, Cosby/Jackson extortion case, Versace murder case and more. World Wide Web: **http://www.thesmokinggun.com**

Weather By E-mail

If you sign up for this service, you'll be able to get the latest weather reports and forecasts by e-mail. The forecasts are sourced from the National Weather Service and free subscriptions are available for American state-wide weather reports. World Wide Web: **http://www.webbers.com/weather**

Web Radio Gateway

If you love listening the radio then you'll probably already be very familiar with some radio stations on the Internet. This site, Web Radio, knows just about all the stations online! There are over 1,000 links to radio stations that broadcast live online, from US stations to Internet-only and international networks. The database is browsable in several ways. World Wide Web: **http://www.web-radio.com**

From The Editorial Pages

It's not just the front page of newspapers that is filled with news on the "Clinton sex scandal." The editorial pages are also full of opinion and views, some of it through cartoons. This Web site has quickly started and includes the latest editorial cartoons on the scandal from award winning artists from newspapers around the world. The site is a special section from the excellent Professional Cartoonists Index site. World Wide Web: **http://www.cagle.com/scandal**

A Free Encyclopedia On The Web

Infonautics, the people who deliver the Electric Library news and information service, have launched a free encyclopedia on the Web. The site is based on the Concise Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia and includes more than 17,000 articles covering a wide range of subjects from politics, law, art, and history to sports, literature, geography, science, and medicine. World Wide Web: **http://www.encyclopedia.com**

The Complete Bob Dylan

This site is a must for all Bob Dylan fans. Sponsored by Columbia Records, the site offers a discography covering both albums and singles, a searchable database of lyrics, RealAudio clips of songs, information on live performances and lots more. You'll enjoy the site if you don't have a multimedia PC but the many RealAudio clips really make this a great site. World Wide Web: **http://www.bobdylan.com**

Date and Time Gateway

If you ever need to work out the current date or time in a city around the world, check this site. It presents a very complete list of capital and major cities around the world. Just click on the name and find out the local date and time there, right down to the second! World Wide Web: **http://www.bsdi.com/date**

Official Home Of Rube Goldberg

Rube Goldberg was a Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist, sculptor, and author, best known for his wacky inventions. The official Web site contains some of his best work, cartoons that strike fun at modern technology and the complexity of today's life. There's also information about the Rube Goldberg machine contest. World Wide Web: **http://www.rube-goldberg.com**

NASA Solar System Simulator

There seems to be no end to the great stuff available from the NASA Web site. It's Solar System Simulator allows users to see any of the planets or moons in the solar system as seen from the earth. But that's not all, you can select the date and time, size of the image, plus field of view and more. You'll love it! World Wide Web: **http://space.jpl.nasa.gov**

When You've Got To Have The Last Word

If you're scientifically inclined, or love trivia, this is a dangerous site to visit! You could easily get carried away and spend a long time on the New Scientist Last Word site finding out why airplane lights are dimmed during take-off and landing, what's the origin of steel wool, why corned beef (and no other tinned food) comes in such strangely shaped tins, and much more! World Wide Web: **http://www.last-word.com**

WSJ Adds Tax Guide

The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition has launched its Tax Classroom, a comprehensive online guide developed to help subscribers understand the new tax law and how it relates to them. Tax Classroom provides a tutorial on the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, highlighting the most significant changes affecting individual taxpayers. It is comprised of three lessons: Individual Retirement Accounts, Capital Gains and Estate Taxes, and Education and Child Tax Credits. You need an WSJ subscription to access the site. World Wide Web: **http://www.wsj.com**

GadgetBoy

Likely to appeal to anyone that loves gadgets, this Web site reviews cool computer related "toys." Recently featured on the weekly updated Web site, the NewsCatcher information service, a new Apple PowerBook, a laser printer from Oki and the Psion 3A handheld computer. World Wide Web: **http://www.gadgetboy.com**

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★ ***Into games and gaming?*** *Log into one of the many game BBS' or servers on the Internet! Choose your favorite game, and you will find there are more than just a few places to go and engage against other adventurers!*

Owned and operated by KC4UFI (Jerry Russell), and KD4MIW (Sharon Russell).

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Toll-free statewide: **1-800-676-2599**

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QCWA News - Frank Obenauf (W2IAJ), Editor

Chapter 128, Pelican

The Pelican Chapter #128 meeting was held at Stacey's Bulfet, located at 10th Avenue and 58th Street North, in St Petersburg. There were 36 members and guests in attendance.

Woody Huddleston K45CL read a ARRL bulletin stating that the ARRL awarded the 1997 ARRL Humanitarian Award to Mae Burke W3CUL (SK) and Al Burke W3VR. Both of these Amateurs are members of the Gator Chapter #32, and QCWA members.

The program was entitled the "Final 33 Minutes of World War II". The program was brought to us by Mr. Howard Groth, who was aboard the Battleship Misouri, in Tokyo Bay when the surrender was signed. Mr. Groth's description was outstanding, and held all the Pelicans spellbound. Next month's program will be given by George Sallet, K4DSB, who will talk on his Destroyer the USS Bagley.

Blanche Randles, W4GXZ, gave a report on the taped QCWA Journal, for the vision impaired. She urged that if any Pelican knows of a sight impaired QCWA member to give her their name, so they may receive the audio copy free of charge. Paul Dittbrener, K2KYN was accepted and welcomed as a member of the Chapter. Paul lives in St Petersburg, with his wife Nancy. Paul is retired from IBM as a engineering technican.

Wes Randles W4COW, speaking as QCWA National Historian, stated that he was in need of artides related to earlier activites of QCWA members, that he might write artides for future Journals. Wes also stated that he has received his 65 year pin and certificate which he proudly displayed. J. Frederick Strom - Secretary

Chapter 148, Hernando

This year it is time for the biennial election of new officers, and our Nominating Committee has proposed the following slate: President: Jordan Friedman WB2IMO

Vice President Win Knowlton K1BUM Secretary Eunice Gordon W1UKR

Treasurer Jordan Friedman WB2IMO B/D Dick Baker WA40MX B/D Frank McCarthy WIYTB

Additional nominations, if any, may be made from the floor. The retiring Treasurer reports that the present dues rate of $5.00 per year should suffice for the coming year and recommends no change. You are reminded that dues are now due for calendar 1998. Please make checks payable to the secretary so that the payment may be entered into her records and to the computer database

We are looking forward to seeing you all at the meeting. 73 de W1UKR

Chapter #195, Sun City Center

Sun City Center Chapter, #195 of QCWA met at Maggie's Restaurant, on January 15,1998 Our speaker was Kay Anderson who spoke about Packet radio and related topics. Questions and answers completed her talk.

Rita Hale gave information on the March 14th picnic to be held at Simmons Park We will have Hamburgers, hot dogs and the fixings. All members are asked to bring a casserole dish, salad, or desert to feed 8 people. You must bring all your dishes,utensils and forks. A charge of $2.50 per person will be charged to cover expenses. A benefactor has agreed to pay for the pavilion and we thank him for doing it. Ed OReiley has agreed to do the transmitter hunt again with help from Al Brawley. People get your finders ready.

Our 2 Directors were present. Croft Taylor VE3CT and John Edel K8LBZ Croft Taylor spoke on Packet not being dead but getting stronger in the Sarasota area.

President Pickering said that we would have an interesting speaker at the March meeting; Bryan Davison. He will speak on his experiences as an announcer and radio interviewer.

The next meeting will be on March 12,1998. Rita Hale W1UZR

Chapter 196, Edison

A new location has been found for our meetings at the Steak and Ale Restaurant on US 41 in Ft. Myers, Florida. We get together on the second Tuesday of every month at 1130 hours. January's brunch had 11 members and 5 guests.

We were pleased to have Jack Parsons,K3OTY, the President of Chapter #6 in Pittsburgh and his XYL Ann join us. They winter in the area as well as Croft Taylor, VE3CT, who is a QCWA director. Croft was kind enough to speak to us about the new format of the Journal and many other interesting aspects of the organization. Croft asked us all to make sure that headquarters has our proper mailing zip codes that include the plus four digits. It is important because the cost of mailing is determined by the ease in which the post office can sort the Journals for delivery.

Jim Hall, W3JI, spoke to us about the Old Old Timers Club. The OOTC is a group of old timers who have been employed in the communications field at one time or another at least 40 years ago. Many of our members have done exactly that and were glad that Jim let them know about this fine organization. Others that are interested may contact Jim directly.

Jan Scheuerman, KJ4N, has volunteered to work on a web site for our chapter. If anyone would like to help her in this endeavor please feel free to contact her. This sounds like a fun project and Jan is ready to get started right away.

The club has a new call sign thanks to the vanity program and the anonymous donation of one of our members. The new call sign is K4QCW. Let's get busy and use it as soon as possible. With that in mind, do not forget to check into the QCWA Sunday nets. Time and frequencies are announced in the Journal. Tad Burik, WA8PXL, President.

REMINDER:

Please consider checking into the QCWA national nets. The CW net is on Wednesday at 1000ET on 7035. The SSB net is on Sunday at 1500ET on 14,347.

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Florida Traffic Nets

Florida Mid-day Traffic Net (FMTN)

Here we are coming-up to Valentine's Day already. The figures for January were much improved over just a year ago for the same period. 473 stations checked in, we passed 284 pieces of Traffic in a total of 590 minutes during 31 sessions. I would like to thank each and every one of our great Traffic Handlers for their efforts during the passed month. Norm-K4RBR, has become a fairly regular member of the Net from up in Lake Placid area. Duane-K8NEA, from Zephyrhills has also started showing up on a regular basis. We've heard from Harold-KT4XK on the weekends, and he even checks-in mobile while playing Dad's Taxi! No report about the Net would be complete without mentioning the "major players" like Mort-WX4H, Laura-WA9VND, Woody-K4SCL, Gary-KE4DNO, Ted and Clara-KS4FB and KS4DW, Charlie-NR2F, and Tony-WB2FGL. And Arnold-AF4GF, as well as others too numerous to mention.

I hope any of our Net members who hear of new amateurs on the HF bands in Florida will make them feel welcome, and invite them to check in to the FMTN whenever they can. This not only gives new hams a chance to hone their Traffic-Handling skills, but is a great way to make them feel welcome to the hobby and get them up on the air using their new privileges. I know that I speak for any of our members when I say that anyone interested in handling formal NTS Message Traffic is most welcome to our Net, and if they have any questions about Traffic Handling, any one of our members, including myself, would be happy to help after the Net any day.

A good way to break into Traffic Handling is to start by checking into one of the many fine VHF/UHF local Traffic Nets in your Section. You can learn the basic procedures for NTS-formatted Traffic there. Once you feel comfortable on the local Net passing Traffic, start listening to the Florida Mid-day Traffic Net and you'll quickly discover that there are many similarities between your local Net and our Section-level Net. There are also some things that are done on HF that you may not be familiar with. If you find that this happens, wait for the proper time and check into the Net giving your call sign slowly and phonetically, followed by your name and your station location. Then ask for an informal with the Net Control Station (NCS) and ask your question. Any of our NCS will be happy to answer your Traffic-Handling questions once the listed Traffic on the Net has been dealt with.

The Florida Mid-day Traffic Net (FMTN) meets daily starting at 1650UTC. This 10-minute "warm-up" period serves to let stations list their Traffic, have a short chat with any of the other stations on the Net and allows the Net Control time to get everyone checked-into the Net. At 1700 UTC (12 noon) the Net goes formal, and runs until all Traffic has been passed and all Net business is concluded. We meet every day, rain or shine on or about 7242.00khz, so please join us ANY-DAY, EVERY-DAY, ON MID-DAY! 73 Rich-KA2YZM FMTN NET MANAGER

Southwest Florida Traffic Net (SEFTN)

Traffic Net celebrates 20 years on the air...

Monday February 2, 1998 the net celebrated it's 20th year on the air. It was a lot of fun with lots of history and nostalgia from originals such as Blaine, WA4EIC and Basil, K4ENA, Blaine of course was the instigator of the net and Basil among the first checkins 20 years ago. Many interesting pieces of trivia were presented, such as the longest net, the net with the most checkins, the shortest net and the net with the most traffic in the past 20 years. Sadly, it was noted that many of those early participants were no longer with us. George Hart, W1NJM, who actually started the NTS traffic system for ARRL, wintered in Bonita Springs and was a member of the club and an active participant of the net. The Birthday net lasted one hour and twenty four minutes and had 29 checkins and was, I'm sure, enjoyed by most, I know that I certainly did as Net Control. Those of you that missed it sure missed a lot of good information and history. The net started as the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club Net sometime in January 1978 and ran as an informal get together for the first few sessions. It started formally on Feb. 2, 1978 as a traffic net and the name was changed to it's present name of Southwest Florida Traffic Net, to accommodate those in outlying counties and to encourage them to check into the net and use it for traffic. Blame, WA4EIC was responsible for the inception of the Net and was the very first Liaison Station and is still active as Liaison today. Many of those first participants are no longer with us unfortunately, however many more still checking into the net on a regular basis. 73/88 Earl, K4FQU

Traffic Handlers Leave Orlando Hamfest Well Informed

When no one falls asleep and no one leaves, you know it is a great forum. That is what happened with the Traffic Handlers' Forum at the Orlando Hamfest this year.

The 38 attendees of the Traffic Handlers' Forum remained wide awake and learning the finer points of traffic handling. We started with an explanation of the NTS (National Traffic System) including international message handling to third-party countries right down to participation in the local area nets. Having worked with the TCC (Transcontinental Corps) for many years as well as Area (1/3 of the US), State, and Local traffic nets, personal examples were used to enhance understanding. Mass traffic handling using amtor, pactor and clover, especially useful over long distances, was also highlighted.

We reviewed how the net managers are chosen, how nets meet and what they do at their level of operation. The ensuing discussion included the earning of traffic handling awards - certificates given for net participation. We reminded traffic handlers to send Station Activity Reports by the 5th of each month to their designated section official. These SAR reports indicate the number of messages originated, received, sent, delivered, and their total each month. They are then reported section-wide to the ARRL.

The recruitment of new members was another topic with suggestions for encouraging the newer hams to learn proper procedures and be given the opportunity to practice sending and receiving messages. Message format was explained - emphasizing the importance of using the standard format with correct precedence, inclusion of zip code (a necessity for digital transfer), breaks before and after the short text, and closings in the text - not the signature. Packets listing the state nets with their frequencies and times as well as a sample format with a written explanation of sending procedure for CW and phone were made available. All who attended also received a radiogram of thanks for their input and considerations.

For Those who missed the hamfest, the above information can also be found in the ARRL Public Service Manual, ARRL Net Directory, or from your STM or SM. -Morton Goldweber WX4H STM NFL

Public Service Interest at the Miami Hamboree

The Miami Hamboree "Ask Us About Ham Radio" welcome table was busier this year than it has been since the year of the no-code tech license. Colorful banners caught the eye and live demos of color SSTV, packet, and Morse code drew the attention of many.

Bruce Reid, WB9SHT, ASM for Youth Activities, had his end of a packet station set up at the youth/instructors section. He also had W4WLR, Will Rogers, set up and run an SSTV station that allowed photo capturing of those who stopped to watch. Both demos encouraged newer hams to ask questions about the modes. Teachers and youth could also sign up for FYARC (Florida Youth Amateur Radio Club). FYARC is designed to help instructors start school clubs/classes and provide a vehicle for the interchange of information concerning successful activities and strategies. Contact Bruce for more information about FYARC.

The ARES/RACES table, manned by WX4H, Morton Goldweber, STM NFL, and Bruce, attracted 31 already active hams and others who came by to pick up the information packets describing the services and listing all SFL EC's.

WX4H also oversaw the traffic handler's table. 15 traffic hounds signed in and some very interesting discussions ensued. Mort gave out about 60 info packets describing net procedures, traffic formats for various types of nets, and listing all of the Florida nets with their times and frequencies. Interest in this aspect appeared to be increasing.

The regular ARRL information handouts were displayed around a Morse code reader attached to a straight key. Kids and older hams had fun testing their CW skills and some returned several times to recheck for improvement. Working the welcome table is always a pleasure as we help those who are interested in the service aspects of ham radio, those upgrading, or new hams just getting started. Stop by for a visit next year. KA4FZI Welcome Table Chairman

Knights of the Kilocycle - Don Browne (KO4YM), Editor

Hamfest season again

The Knights of the Kilocycle, amateur radio's oldest net, was organized on Christmas Day, 1929, and is now in it's 69th year of operation. The Knights meet every Sunday morning at 7:30 on 3910 Kilocycles. Since 1929 there have been 548 permanent memberships awarded to amateur operators. The Knights always welcomes new members. A membership certificate is earned after five consecutive weekly check-ins to the net.

And here goes the Knightly News:

It's off to the hamfests again. Andy Clark, W4IYT of Miami Springs and Stan, W4JKK of Melbourne had a nice visit at the big Miami fest last month. Stan said the parking lot was at overflowing as hams far and wide took in the newest equipment and browsed over the used stuff as well. Meanwhile at Orlando, reports of muddy parking lots and rain were received.

Wes, W4COW recently was honored by receiving the Phil Stern Award from the Pelican Chapter of the QCWA. Wes has been a ham since 1933. He was QCWA National Treasurer for 14 years and has manned the QCWA booth at the Miami Hamboree for 16 years and also logs in time at the Tampa hamfest booth. Wes is a member of about 15 QCWA chapters in Florida and New England.

Stan reports planting some new trees in his yard recently and Doug N4SLS, of New Port Richey said the rains have raised the lake levels at his home so much that the docks are almost under water. Marion KC4MFT, has some backyard banana plants this year and is wondering if they will survive the high water in New Port Richey.

WB4NTI, Rick checked in running mobile last month. He's been a Knight for some years and was good to hear him on the net again. Also heard was WD8DNE, Don making an appearance on the net.

Jim, NX2II has been putting up some new antennas while Dorothy, N4TXT is finishing up rehab therapy after her fall a while back.

Master Ocillator Bob, W4KOG of North Palm Beach reports going to his grandaughter's 19th birthday party. Fred, K4SMD is back in Interlachen and putting out a good signal from there. The sun spot cycle is still having its ups and downs, still hovering around the 100 mark. We should see the sunspots making for improved propagation over the next few years, while the next few months should bring the average up to about 110. I've actually heard Japan and the far east a few times but unable to make contact yet.

For those who have computers and internet access, please check out my web site at: http://members.aol.com/browne. The amateur radio pages there include Florida and Southwest Florida ham info, Florida repeater listings, listings of all area hams in Hendry, Glades, and west Lee county, online call books, and the latest Knights of the Kilocycle news as well as two QCWA chapter newsletter briefs. Also check out the ham radio web links mentioned in past articles for the Cyberham section of Florida Skip, and the national online yellow pages and white phonebook links. There's even a chat room for those who want to do some online talk.

The Knights encourage new check-ins each Sunday morning to ham radio's oldest net. Please join us each Sunday at 7:30 AM, 3910 Kilocycles and let us know what's been happening in your area. We welcome all hams from anyone that can hear us. Invite your friends to listen and call in Sunday morning. See you all on Sunday morning.

Hams help out at Swamp Cabbage Festival

submitted by Don Brown, KQ4YM

Pictured at the LaBelle Swamp Cabbage Festival are Hendry County R.A.C.E.S. members Jim Sparks AA4BN, Walt Wieland KA4HUY, Harry Schoene K3FTE, Nancy Bidwell AD4JD, Chuck Gillette KE4IQT, and Pete Sutton W9VDS. Hendry County R.A.C.E.S. has been in operation for 15 years.

LABELLE, FL. (Februrary 21, 1998) — Hendry and Glades county amateur radio operators were among the hundreds of volunteers helping to stage the 32nd annual Swamp Cabbage Festival in LaBelle this weekend. The Swamp Cabbage Festival is Hendry County's largest annual event and over 25,000 people visit the area for the parade and weekend activities.

Ham radio operators manned the two-mile long route of the Swamp Stomp 5k Run, a foot race through downtown LaBelle on Saturday morning, February 21. The hams provided communication links by 2-meter radio of the runners' progress through the streets of LaBelle.

Participating were Port LaBelle residents Walt Wieland KA4HUY, Harry Schoene K3FTE, and Pete Sutton, W9VDS. From LaBelle were Nancy Bidwell, AD4JD, and from Clewiston was Jim Sparks, AA4BN, while Moore Haven was represented buy, Chuck Gillette, KE4IQT.

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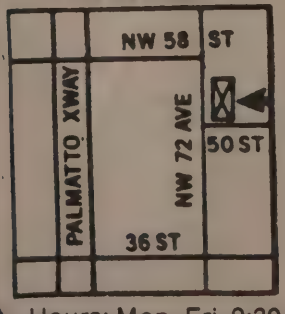

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Statistics

SFL BBS Totals - Jan., 1998

Compiled by Bill Britton, KB4VOL

BBS	NTS	PERS	BUL	TOT	MSGS
AE4IG	10	338	4772	5120	
K0ZXF	0	423	5300	5723	
K4VJI	5	160	4550	4715	
KB4GBS	-NO REPORT-				
KB4VOL	OFF THE AIR - LIGHTNING DAMAGE				
KB4WUA	-NO REPORT-				
KC4YEK	-NO REPORT-				
KD4GR	-NO REPORT-				
KE2IX	-NO REPORT-				
KF4BPX	0	337	4874	5211	
KF4OJ	0	89	4262	4351	
KN6KB	1	125	49	175	
KO4KS	-NO REPORT-				
KP4EDL	0	291	4528	4819	
N4AWX	-NO REPORT-				
N4HHP	121	7270	21523	28914	GATEWAY
N4XEO	8	714	5424	6146	
W4MIN	5	327	5126	5458	
W4MLB	1	664	5495	6160	
W4MWP	-NO REPORT-				
W4OT	5	215	8754	8974	
WA2LKI	-NO REPORT-				
WB2WPA	0	89	4539	4628	
WB4MOZ	10	323	4545	4878	
WB4TEM	-NO REPORT-				
WD8IBY	-NO REPORT-				

NTS TOTAL: 175

Take a look at this list. So many BBSs not reporting! Are they still on the air? Somebody, please let me know.

Please continue to sent the monthly reports to KB4VOL @ N4XEO -or-(if you have E-Mail) send them direct to kb4vol@gate.net (That's faster!)

Do NOT send to: kb4vol@juno.com (That address has been discontinued and they'll just get lost!)

Thanks to Bill, N4XEO, for his continued help.

73... Bill KB4VOL, ARRL Packet Manager South Florida.

****

* VISIT THE FL HAM WEB SITE! LOTS OF HAM INFO AND THE MONTHLY LISTS! *

* http://pages.prodigy.com/kb4vol *

****

Crossword goof

A crossword puzzle in the popular weekly TV Guide January 17 badly blurred the distinction between ham radio and CB. In the puzzle, "CBer" was given as the answer for the clue "ham radio user." ARRL Public Relations Specialist Jennifer Gagne, N1TDY, wrote TV Guide after several members brought the error to the League's attention. In a follow-up call, she was told that the appropriate staff people were made aware of the mistake and that the magazine may run a brief item telling readers that letters were received on the issue. Gagne said it was unlikely that the puzzle would ever be reprinted.

NFL BBS Totals - Jan., 1998

Compiled by Dave Sutherland, N4GMU

STATION	BUL	PERS	NTS	TFC TOT
WB4NOD	5992	188	16	6196
WX4J	27	108	79	214
KC4YEK	1366	186	2	1366
N4JTS	1223	202	7	1432
N4GMU	1408	200	17	1625
WA4FEA	14	25	0	39

NTS TOTAL: 121

Top Twenty Trafficers - Jan., 1998

by AA4HT and WX4H

	Station	Total		Station	Total
1	W3VR	1998	11	W4DL	250
2	WX4H	1047	12	AF4GF	204
3	WA9VND	758	13	KD4HGU	182
4	KE4DNO	502	14	K4PG	169
5	K4SCL	464	15	KD4GR	165
6	AB4XK	441	16	KE4OAV	157
8	KB4WBY	316	18	WA4NDA	149
9	KC4ZHF	315	19	WB2FGL	148
10	KA2YZM	255	20	WB4PAM	138

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RAFT CARRYING HAM RADIO LOST AT SEA

Tragic news from the Far East this week: Word from South Korea is that all hands aboard a research raft carrying ham radio station HL0JQT/mm (see "Raft /mm station active," The ARRL Letter, Vol 17, No 4) were lost January 24 in heavy seas off the coast of Japan. Japanese Maritime Safety Agency authorities had responded to a distress call that the crew was extremely exhausted. It's not clear if the distress call went out on Amateur Radio frequencies, however. Bodies of three of the crew members had been recovered, but a fourth was still missing in the frigid waters and presumed drowned.

The 23-foot research raft, which had a sail but no engine, was attempting a voyage from Vladivostok, Russia, to Pusan, South Korea, when it capsized in stormy seas. News reports from South Korea said the four-man crew, led by 48-year-old skipper Lee Duk-young, was attempting to retrace the sea route linking Palhae, an ancient Korean dynasty that originated in northeast China, to the Korean Peninsula.—Vernon Eubanks, K0LVS/HL9VE

Outgoing QSL Service stats

Propagation must be looking up. The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service handled 1,378,240 QSL cards to DX stations during 1997—that's 9,200 pounds, or more than 4-1/2 tons, of cards. The number represents an increase from 1996 of more than 78,000 cards handled.

BSRG, ATV, APRS, and Balloon Web sites change

The Web address for several popular ham radio organizations has changed. Ralph Fowler, N4NEQ, reports the new address, http://www.BSRG.org, is the new home for The Big Shanty Repeater Group (BSRG), the Atlanta Balloonatics, the Atlanta Amateur Television Network (AATN), and the Atlanta APRS Network. Intercept links will continue to operate at the old Web addresses for several months.—Ralph Fowler, N4NEQ

Radio Coaches Program ready to roll

The ARRL's Radio Coaches program staff reports that the League has received more than 100 requests for application materials for the new youth-oriented club program.

Radio Coaches stems from the kickoff of America's Promise, the Alliance for Youth, a national campaign to improve the lives of the nation's young people and put them on paths to brighter, more productive futures. The ARRL Board of Directors authorized the creation of the Radio Coaches program as Amateur Radio's commitment to youth.

Through Radio Coaches, we want to reinforce the idea that Amateur Radio is a "sport for the brain." Ham radio provides not only a lifetime of enjoyment, but also, potentially, a lifetime career.

Special Radio Coaches binders full of additional program information, advisor sheets and student handouts will go out soon to all those who have requested a program application.

It's not too late to get your club involved! For more information on Radio Coaches or to sign up your club, contact Jennifer Gagne, N1TDY, 860-594-0328; e-mail coaches@arrl.org.

No Exams at Stuart Hamfest

The Stuart Hamfest will take place on March 21 but according to the Treasure Coast Radio Examiners group, no exams will be administered. However TCRE will hold their regularily scheduled exams at the Port St. Lucie Police Department starting at 0900 on March 28th and on the fourth Saturday of each month thereafter.

PHASE 3D CLOSER TO REALITY

The Phase 3D Amateur Radio satellite is approximately 90% complete, and work continues at the Integration Lab in Orlando, Florida, to get the package ready for launch later this year. AMSAT officials remain optimistic that the Phase 3D payload can hitch a ride aboard the European Space Agency's next Ariane test flight, AR-503. It's expected that AR-503 will lift off in late spring or early summer from Kourou, French Guiana.

QST Managing Editor and satellite columnist Steve Ford, WB8IMY, recently visited the Integration Lab. He says he was impressed by the way the AMSAT Phase 3D team has managed to keep down costs by manufacturing many expensive-to-buy items themselves. "In the best ham tradition," Ford says, "they also 'shopped smart,' getting donated gear and components whenever possible or procuring components at bargain prices."

Ford and other presenters attracted nearly three dozen satellite enthusiasts to a workshop during the Orlando Hamcation the weekend of February 13 and 14. Ford says the workshop attempted to bust the myths that satellites are hard to work and that setting up a satellite station is expensive. Other presenters in the five-hour session included Barry Baines, WD4ASW, Steve Bible, N7HPR, Dick Jansson, WD4FAB, and Keith Pugh, W5IU.

CUSHCRAFT CONTINUES IN HAM MARKET; HIRES NEW VEEP

Cushcraft says reports of its demise in the ham radio market have been greatly exaggerated. Cushcraft Production Manager Art Hambleton, K1ART, says the New Hampshire antenna manufacturer is still very much a part of the Amateur Radio antenna industry. Rumors that Cushcraft was exiting the ham market apparently mushroomed when word spread of some layoffs at Cushcraft.

Hambleton confirmed that a couple of people had been let go and that Cushcraft had cut back on its advertising in ham radio publications, and he attributed the moves to budgetary cutbacks. But he said "1997 was not a bad year" for the company. And Cushcraft has just hired another ham in a key position.

Hambleton announced this week that Cushcraft has hired Adam Alevy, N1FXT, of Amherst, New Hampshire, as its vice president of engineering. Alevy was previously with Atlantic Microwave of Bolton, Massachusetts. At Atlantic he designed VHF through millimeter wave antennas for communications and tracking applications.

As director of engineering at Cushcraft, Hambleton said, Alevy, 34, will manage the engineering group and design antennas in both commercial and amateur radio markets.

Cushcraft recently announced its X7 and X9 tribanders as part of its "Big Thunder" series.

Upcoming Shows in Florida - Feb., 1998

Compiled by
Bill Britton, KB4VOL

DATE	LOCATION	NOTES
Mar 1	Zephryhills	"Phinney Fest" at Lions Club 5827 Dean Diary Rd. Talk-in on 147.135 INFO: Ernie, KD4VRV (813) 783-8389
Mar 7	Spring Hill	VFW Hall on Spring Hill Drive Talk-in on 146.715 INFO: Lee, WA3YMV (352) 799-1638
Mar 7	Englewood	Tringali Community Center S.R. 776 Talk-in on 146.700 INFO: George, KA4JKY (941) 697-3445
Mar 21	Stuart	FREE! At Martin County Fairgrounds **(NOTE CORRECTED DATE!)** A1A, south of Stuart Talk-in on 147.060 INFO: Dave, KE4AMW (561) 288-7100
Apr 11	Coral Gables	U of Miami Swapfest (Rain date APR 12) Physics Parking lot Talk-in on 146.865 INFO: Walt, W4DWN (305) 895-0398
Apr 24/25	Gainesville	Alachua County Fairgrounds SR 24 & SR 222 Talk-in on 146.820 INFO: Larry Walker (352) 377-0683
June 27	Ft. McCoy	Ft. McCoy Community Center Off SR 316 Talk-in on 146.940 INFO: Tom, KS4ZI (352) 546-3967
Sept 27	New Port Richey	At Recreational Center Talk-in on 145.35/147.15 INFO: Ron, N9EE (813) 376-6575
Oct 4	Maitland	At Bahia Shrine A.R.U. 2300 Pembrook Dr. Talk-in on 147.390 INFO: Cecil, K4KEN (407) 281-9169
Oct 10/11	Tampa	Egypt Temple ARA Hamfest 4050 Dana Shores Drive Talk-in on 146.940 INFO: Jay, K9BSL (813) 822-9107
Nov 7	Sorrento	E. Lake Chamber of Commerce County Rd 437 off SR 46 Talk-in on 147.255 INFO: Chuck, KE4EXM (353) 669-2075
Nov 14	Titusville	FREE! At Fox Lake Park Talk-in on 146.970/444.150 INFO: Clyde, K4EOS (407) 267-9375

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HELP AVOID CONFLICTS - GET YOUR DATES IN EARLY!
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8703 S.E. Jardin St. Hobe Sound, FL 33455
E-Mail: kb4vol@gate.net (Send additions or changes this way...quicker!)

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LOTS OF LINKS & THE MONTHLY LISTS!
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US to participate in CEPT license arrangement

US amateurs soon will not need to apply for reciprocal licenses in order to operate during short visits to most European countries. While an official announcement still may be a few weeks away, it's been learned the US request to participate in the European guest license arrangement has been approved. Similarly, most European hams visiting the US no longer will have to submit FCC Form 610A.

Approval of the US request came in late January at a meeting of the CEPT Radio Regulatory Working Group (WGRR), in Groningen, The Netherlands. The European Radiocommunications Office (ERO) has been instructed to officially notify the FCC of the decision approving US participation.

Last September, the US State Department applied for US participation in the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) Amateur Radio licensing system. A holders of a CEPT license can operate in CEPT-participating countries without having to apply for a reciprocal license.

The State Department's action came at the urging of the ARRL that the US take advantage of the CEPT Recommendation T/R 61-01 arrangements and issue a license that would be recognized by CEPT-participating administrations and would be valid for brief visits.

Also last fall, the FCC proposed amending the Amateur Radio rules to make it easier for hams holding a CEPT license or an International Amateur Radio Permit (IARP) to operate during short visits to the US.

Under the soon-to-be-implemented arrangement, a US Technician license would be recognized as a CEPT Class 2 (VHF-only) license, with full privileges above 30 MHz. Holders of Tech Plus through Extra tickets would be given a CEPT Class 1 license, with full privileges on HF and VHF. Novice licensees would not be eligible for a CEPT equivalent license since most CEPT countries don't offer a license of this type.

Once the ERO formally advises the FCC of the decision, the FCC must complete the steps to implement the participation before CEPT licensing can become effective.

"We've been urging the Commission to do this since 1991," said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ. "Now that CEPT has given the green light, we hope the FCC will step on the gas."

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WORLD WAR II HAM RADIO MONITORS SOUGHT

A Delaware man is looking for hams and shortwave listeners who monitored enemy radio broadcasts during World War II. Frank Davis, who was captured by Germany during WWII, wants to formally recognize those who monitored radio broadcasts for information about German prisoners of war. "I'm hoping to get them a presidential citation and maybe even a monument," he told the Wilmington News Journal last month.

Davis, a retired civil engineer, says he was captured by the Germans near the end of the War. An Army Airborne paratrooper, he had been wounded and hospitalized near Bastogne, Belgium, and was caught up in the desperate German offensive that became known as the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. Davis says he and the other captors were used as slave labor.

His family, frantic to find out what had happened to him, was only told that Davis was missing in action. But then, mail and even telegrams began to arrive at his family's home saying that Frank Davis was a POW, and, despite being wounded, was alive and well. Davis says his parents got 38 cards, letters and telegrams—all of them from hams or shortwave listeners who had monitored German broadcasts and relayed the news they heard about POWs.

After the War, Davis took up an engineering career, got married, and raised a family.

It wasn't until two years ago that Davis—who'd earned a Purple Heart and the Combat Infantryman's Badge—decided to find the hams who had alerted his parents during the War. He wrote letters to all 38 individuals and heard back from three, with whom he now corresponds. Now, he'd like to hear from others. To contact Frank Davis, write PO Box 6207, Stanton, DE 19804; fax 302-994-0109.

Contacting SKIP

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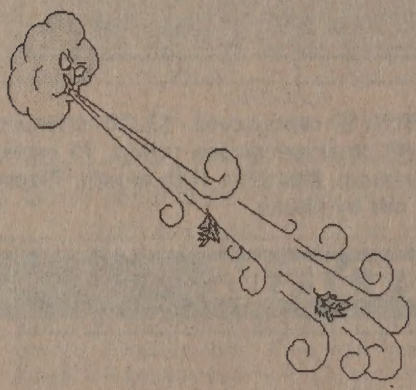

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